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AUTHOR Page, Jane A.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze three roles related to student teaching: elementary school student teachers, supervising teachers, and university supervisors. Analysis served two purposes: (1) to identify role perceptions of each of the three groups; and (2) to determine whether significant differences exist in the perceived roles, as identified by the individuals occupying those positions. Significant differences were found in the overall perceptions of the student teacher role, as identified by the three groups. Significant differences did not exist in the overall perceptions of the cooperating teacher role or university supervisory role. Findings indicate a need for provision of planned opportunities at specific, periodic intervals for discussion among and within these groups as a basis for developing clarity and consensus.
(Authors/JD)

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THE STUDENT TEACHING TRIAD:

AN ANALYSIS OF ROLE PERCEPTIONS

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By

Jane A. Page

Fred M. Page, Jr.

Georgia Southern College
Statesboro, Georgia

Aubrey W. Shelton

Mississippi State University
Starkville, Mississippi

Presented to

The Mid-South Educational Research Association

New Orleans, Louisiana

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SUMMARY PAPER

The purpose of this study was to analyze three roles related to student teaching: elementary student teachers, supervising teachers, and university supervisors. Analyses served three purposes: (1) to identify role perceptions of student teachers, supervising teachers, and university supervisors; and (2) to determine whether significant differences exist in the perceived roles, as identified by the individuals occupying those positions.

Identified and unidentified role expectancies for positions within the student teaching program are continuously changing. Developing a method for analyzing these differences would provide data for diminishing conflict and for evaluation of expectancies in terms of perceptions.

Participants in the study included: 36 pre-student teachers, 41 student teachers, 41 supervising teachers, and 27 university supervisors. Participants were directly related to a university in which supervision of student teachers by university supervisors was accomplished through a transciency approach.

Three role perception instruments devised by the authors were utilized for ascertaining perceptions of the various groups; internal reliability with alpha coefficients was established for each instrument. The "Student Teacher Role Perception Instrument," "Supervising Teacher Role Perception Instrument," and the "University Supervisor Role Perception Instrument" contained 32, 27, and 30 controlled-choice items and alpha coefficients of .83, .91, and .87, respectively.

Respondents rated each item on a five point scale. The range of possible responses was from five, indicating an item was perceived as essential, to one, indicating an item was perceived as of no importance.

Analysis of variance was computed to determine whether significant differences, on total scores and individual items, existed at the .05 level. When significant F ratios were found, the Scheffe test was used for a post hoc comparison of means to determine where the differences existed.

Significant differences existed in the overall perceptions of the student teacher role, as identified by the three groups. Significant differences did not exist in the overall perceptions of the supervising teacher role or university supervisor role. Significant differences in perceptions of: the student teacher role existed on 22 of 32 items; the supervising teacher on nine of 27 items; and the university supervisor on 12 of 27 items.

Findings indicate a need for provision of planned opportunities at specific, periodic intervals for discussion among and within groups as a basis for developing clarity and consensus. These discussions will permit members of all groups to identify areas of potential conflict and to work toward eliminating or reducing the sources of conflict.

Table 1

Results of Scheffe Tests for Items Showing Significant Differences in Perceptions of Student Teacher Roles as Identified by Pre-Student Teachers (PST), Student Teachers (ST), Supervising Teachers (SupT), and University Supervisors (US)

	Item	Results
1.	have complete responsibility for the class	SupT, US > ST, PST
3.	instruct small groups of pupils	US > PST, ST
5.	engage in total class teaching activities	US > ST, PST and SupT, ST > PST
6.	prepare daily and weekly lesson plans	US, SupT > PST
8.	use systematic observation techniques	No difference was confirmed.
9.	assign grades to students' work	SupT > ST, PST
10.	confer with the supervising teacher focusing on the supervising teacher's instruction	No difference was confirmed.
13.	participate in a parent-teacher conference	US, ST, PST > SupT.
15.	interrelate subject matter discipline	US > PST
17.	attend professional organization meetings	No difference was confirmed.
18.	assist in making written reports to parents	US > SupT, PST

Table 1 - Continued

	Item	Results
19.	attend PTA meetings	US > PST
20.	perform bookkeeping duties	SupT > PST
21.	construct and administer written tests to students	SupT > PST
22.	perform housekeeping duties	SupT > PST, ST
23.	diagnose errors of pupils	US > ST, PST and SupT > PST
25.	plan and implement a unit of study	No difference was confirmed.
27.	plan and carry out plans for diagnostic and prescriptive work	US > ST, SupT, PST
28.	work with individual pupils	No difference was confirmed
29.	fulfill requirements of the university supervisor	SupT > ST
30.	confer with the supervising teacher focusing on the student teacher's instruction	US > ST, PST and SupT > PST
31.	prepare teaching aids	SupT > PST

Table 2

Results of Scheffe Tests for Items Showing Significant Differences in Perceptions of Supervising Teacher Roles, as Identified by Student Teachers (ST), Supervising Teachers (SupT) and University Supervisors (US)

	Item	Results
1.	prepare a place for the student teachers, their work materials and personal belongings	SupT > ST, US
5.	arrange for student teacher observation of well-planned lessons designed to illustrate good principles of teaching and learning	US > ST
12.	plan for the student teacher to have charge of the class for a few days	US > ST
16.	lead the student teacher to discover practical suggestions for classroom control	US > SupT, ST
17.	give specific suggestions for improvement of student teacher's class activities	US > SupT
19.	involve the student teacher in the evaluation of students	US > ST
21.	schedule conferences for rendering information to the student teacher and providing feedback	US > ST, SupT

Table 2 - Continued

Item	Results
25. diagnose the student teacher's performance level and prescribe or revise a suitable sequence of experiences	US > ST
26. read all of the student teacher's written work related to the student teaching experience and write annotations to give guidance to the student teacher	ST > Supt

Table 3

Results of Scheffe Tests for Items Showing Significant Differences in Perceptions of University Supervisor Roles, as Identified By Student Teachers (ST), Supervising Teachers (SupT), and University Supervisors (US)

Item	Results
1. cooperatively plan and conduct in-service programs to strengthen skills of supervising teachers and other members of the supervising team	ST > SupT
3. constructively analyze teaching performance of student teachers	US > ST
4. engage in observation periods that are of sufficient length	US > ST
5. observe student teachers in instructional practices	US > SupT, ST
6. observe student teachers at least the minimum number of identified times	US > SupT, ST and SupT > ST
10. provide information concerning requirements prior to entering student teaching	SupT > US
11. write professional recommendations to prospective employers	ST > SupT
12. orient student teachers to the school environment	No difference was confirmed
18. confer individually with student teachers to help them improve their instructional practices	US > SupT
19. provide opportunities for student teachers to talk	US > SupT, ST

Table 3 - Continued

	Item	Results
22.	plan and conduct on-campus seminars for supervising teachers	US, ST > SupT
27.	provide and maintain contact with the placement service concerning job opportunities	ST > US